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ORATION

AT RAISING THE OLD FLAG OVER FORT SUMTER,

APRIL 14TH, 1865.

BY REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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SCHERMERHORN, BANCROFT & CO.,
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REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER'S

FORT SUMTER ORATION.

APRIL 14TH, 1865.

ON this solemn and joyful day we again lift to the breeze our fathers' flag, now again the banner of the United States, with the fervent prayer that God would crown it with honor, protect it from treason, and send it down to our children with all the blessings of civilization, liberty, and religion. Terrible in battle, may it be beneficent in peace. Happily no bird or beast of prey has been inscribed upon it. The stars that redeem the night from darkness, and the beams of red light that beautify the morning, have been united upon its folds. As long as the sun endures, or the stars, may it wave over a nation neither enslaved nor enslaving.

Once, and but once, has treason dishonored it. In that insane hour, when the guiltiest and bloodiest rebellion of time hurled its fires upon this fort, you, sir (turning to General Anderson), and a small heroic band stood within these now crumbled walls, and did gallant and just battle for the honor and defence of the nation's banner. In that cope of fire this glorious flag still peacefully waved to the breeze above your head, unconscious of harm as the stars and skies above it. Once it was shot down; a gallant hand, in whose care this day it has been placed, plucked it from

the ground, and reared it again, "cast down, but not destroyed." After a vain resistance, with trembling hand and sad heart, you withdrew it from its height, closed its wings, and bore it far away, sternly to sleep amid the tumults of rebellion and the thunder of battle.

The first act of war had begun. The long night of four years had set in. While the giddy traitors whirled in a maze of exhilaration, dim horrors were already advancing, that were ere long to fill the land with blood. To-day you are returned again; we devoutly join with you in thanksgiving to Almighty God, that He has spared your honored life, and vouchsafed to you the glory of this day. The heavens over you are the same; the same shores are here. Morning comes and evening as they did. All else how changed! What grim batteries crowd the burdened shores! What scenes have filled this air and disturbed these waters! These shattered heaps of shapeless stones are all that is left of Fort Sumter. Desolation broods in yonder sad city. Solemn retribution hath avenged our dishonored banner.

You have come back with honor who departed hence four years ago, leaving the air sultry with fanaticism. The surging crowds that rolled up their frenzied shouts as the flag came down are dead, or scattered, or silent, and their habitations are desolate. Ruin sits in the cradle of treason, rebellion has perished, but there flies the same flag that was insulted! With starry eyes it looks all over this bay for that banner that supplanted it, and sees it not. You, that then for the day were humbled, are here again to triumph once and forever. In the storm of that assault this glorious ensign was often struck, but, memorable fact, not one of its stars was torn out by shot or shell. It was a prophecy. It said, "Not one State shall be struck from this nation by treason." The fulfilment is at hand, Lifted to the air, to-day, it pro-

claims, that after four years of war, "Not a State is blotted out." Hail to the flag of our fathers and our flag! Glory to the banner that has gone through four years, black with tempests of war, to pilot the nation back to peace without dismemberment! And glory be to God who, above all hosts and banners, hath ordained victory and shall ordain peace!

Wherefore have we come hither, pilgrims from distant places? Are we come to exult that Northern hands are stronger than Southern? No! but to rejoice that the hands of those who defend a just and beneficent Government are mightier than the hands that assaulted it. Do we exult over fallen cities? We exult that a nation has not fallen! We sorrow with the sorrowful, we sympathize with the desolate, we look upon this shattered fort and yonder dilapidated city with sad eyes, grieved that men should have committed such treason; but glad that God hath set such a mark upon treason, that all ages shall dread and abhor it. We exult, not for a passion gratified, but for a sentiment victorious; not for temper, but for conscience; not, as we devoutly believe, that *our* will is done, but that God's will hath been done. We should be unworthy of that liberty intrusted to our care if, on such a day as this, we sullied our hearts by feelings of aimless vengeance, and equally unworthy if we did not devoutly thank Him who hath said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," that He hath set a mark upon arrogant rebellion ineffaceable while time lasts.

Since this flag went down, on that dark day, who shall tell the mighty woes that have made this land a spectacle to angels and men! The soil has drank blood and is glutted; millions mourn for millions slain, or, envying the dead, pray for oblivion; towns and villages have been razed; fruitful fields have turned back to wilderness. It came to pass, as

the prophet said: *The sun was turned to darkness and the moon to blood.* The course of law was ended. The sword sat chief magistrate in half the nation; industry was paralyzed, morals corrupted; the public weal invaded by rapine and anarchy; whole States were ravaged by avenging armies. The world was amazed. The earth reeled. When the flag sunk here, it was as if political night had come, and all beasts of prey had come forth to devour. That long night is ended, and for this returning day we have come from afar to rejoice and give thanks. No more war! No more accursed secession! No more slavery that spawned them both! Let no man misread the meaning of this unfolding flag. It says, Government hath returned hither; it proclaims, in the name of vindicated Government, peace and protection to loyalty; humiliation and pains to traitors. This is the flag of sovereignty. The nation, not the State, is sovereign! Restored to authority, this flag commands, not supplicates. There may be pardon, but no concession. There may be amnesty and oblivion, but no honeyed compromises. The nation to-day has peace for the peaceful, and war for the turbulent. The only condition of submission is to submit. There is the Constitution, there are the laws, there is the Government. They rise up like mountains of strength that shall not be moved. They are the conditions of peace. One nation under one Government, without slavery, has been ordained and shall stand. There can be peace on no other basis. On this basis reconstruction is easy, and needs neither architect nor engineer. Without this basis no engineer or architect shall ever reconstruct these rebellious States.

We do not want your cities or your fields; we do not envy you your prolific soil, nor heavens full of perpetual summer. Let agriculture revel here; let manufactures make every stream twice musical; build fleets in every port; inspire the arts of peace with genius

second only to that of Athens, and we shall be glad in your gladness and rich in your wealth. All that we ask is unswerving loyalty and universal liberty; and that, in the name of this *high sovereignty of the United States of America*, we demand, and that, with the blessing of Almighty God, *we will have!*

We raise our fathers' banner, that it may bring back better blessings than those of old, that it may cast out the devil of discord; that it may restore lawful government and a prosperity purer and more enduring than that which it protected before; that it may win parted friends from their alienation; that it may inspire hope and inaugurate universal liberty; that it may say to the sword, *Return to thy sheath*, and to the plough and sickle, *Go forth*; that it may heal all jealousies, unite all policies, inspire a new national life, compact our strength, purify our principles, ennoble our national ambitions, and make this people great and strong; not for aggression and quarrelsomeness, but for *the peace of the world*; giving to us the glorious prerogative of leading all nations to juster laws, to more humane policies; to sincerer friendship, to rational instituted civil liberty, and to universal Christian brotherhood. Reverently, piously, in hopeful patriotism, we spread this banner on the sky, as of old the bow was planted on the cloud, and with solemn fervor, beseech God to look upon it, and make it the memorial of an everlasting covenant and decree, that never again on this fair land shall a deluge of blood prevail.

Why need any eye turn from this spectacle? Are there not associations which, overleaping the recent past, carry us back to times when, over North and South, this flag was honored alike by all? In all our colonial days we were one; in the long Revolutionary struggle, and in the scores of prosperous years succeeding we were united. When the passage of the Stamp Act, in 1765, aroused the colonies, it was Gadsden, of South Carolina, that cried

with prescient enthusiasm : "*We stand on the broad common ground of those natural rights that we all feel and know as men.* There ought to be no New England man, no New Yorker known on this continent, but all of us," said he, "Americans." That *was* the voice of South Carolina, that *shall be* again the voice of South Carolina !

Faint is the echo ; but it is coming ; we now hear it sighing sadly through the pines, but it shall yet break in thunder upon the shore —no North, no West, no South, but the United States of America ! There is scarcely a man born in the South who has lifted his hand against this banner, but had a father who would have died for it. Is memory dead ? Is there no historic pride ? Has a fatal fury struck blindness or hate into eyes that used to look kindly toward each other, that read the same Bible, that hung over the historic pages of our national glory, that studied the same Constitution ?

Let this uplifting bring back all of the past that was good, but leave in darkness all that was bad. The flag was never before so wholly unspotted, so clear of all wrong, so purely and simply the sign of justice and liberty. Did I say that we brought back the same banner that you bore away, noble and heroic sir ? It is not the same—it is more and better than it was.

The land is free from slavery since that banner fell. When God would prepare Moses for emancipation, he overthrew his first steps, and drove him for forty years to brood in the wilderness. When our flag came down, four years it lay brooding in darkness ; it cried to the Lord, Wherefore am I deposed ? Then arose before it a vision of its sin. It had strengthened the strong and forgotten the weak. It proclaimed Liberty, but trod upon slaves. In that seclusion it dedicated itself to liberty. Behold, to-day it fulfils its vows. When it went down, four millions of people had no flag ; to-day it rises, and four million people cry

out, Behold *our* flag! Hark, they murmur; it is the Gospel that they recite in sacred words: "It is a Gospel to the poor, it heals our broken hearts; it preaches deliverance to captives; it gives sight to the blind; it sets at liberty them that are bruised." Rise up, then, glorious Gospel banner, and roll out these messages of God! Tell the air that not a spot now sullies thy whiteness. Thy red is not the blush of shame, but the flush of joy. Tell the dews that wash thee that thou art pure as they. Say to the night that thy stars lead toward the morning, and to the morning, that a brighter day arises with healing in its wings. And then, oh glowing flag, bid the sun pour light on all thy folds with double brightness, while thou art bearing round and round the world, the solemn joy—a race set free! a nation redeemed!

The mighty hand of Government made strong in war by the favor of the God of battles, spreads wide to-day the Banner of Liberty, that went down in darkness, that arose in light; and there it streams like the sun above it, neither parcelled out nor monopolized, but flooding the air with light for all mankind. Ye scattered and broken, ye wounded and dying, bitten by the fiery serpents of oppression, everywhere, in all the world, look upon this sign lifted up, and live! Ye homeless and houseless slaves, look, and ye are free. At length *you*, too, have part and lot in this glorious ensign, that broods with impartial love over small and great, over the poor and the strong, the bond and the free.

In this solemn hour let us pray for the quick coming of reconciliation and happiness under this common flag. But we must build again from the foundations in all these now free Southern States. No cheap exhortations to forgetfulness of the past, to restore all things as they were, will do. God does not stretch out His hand as He has for four dreadful years, that men may easily forget the might of His terrible acts. Restore

things as they were? What, the alienations and jealousies, the discords and contentions, and the causes of them? No! In that solemn sacrifice on which a nation has offered up for its sins so many precious victims loved and lamented, let our sins and mistakes be consumed utterly and forever. No! Never again shall things be restored as before the war!

It is written in God's decree of events fulfilled, "Old things have passed away." That new earth in which dwelleth righteousness draws near. Things as they were? Who has an omnipotent hand to restore a million dead, slain in battle, or wasted by sickness, or dying of grief, broken-hearted? Who has omniscience to search for the scattered ones? Who shall restore the lost to broken families? Who shall bring back the squandered treasure, the years of industry wasted, and convince you that four years of guilty rebellion and cruel war are no more than dirt upon the hand which a moment's washing removes, and leaves the hand clean as before? Such a war reaches down to the very vitals of society. Emerging from such a prolonged rebellion, he is blind who tells you that the State, by a mere amnesty and benevolence of government, can be put again, by a mere decree, in its old place. It would not be honest—it would not be kind or fraternal for me to pretend that Southern revolution against the Union has not reacted and wrought revolution in the Southern States themselves, and inaugurated a new dispensation. Society here is like a broken loom, and the piece which rebellion put in and was weaving has been cut, and every thread broken. You must put in new warp, and new woof, and weaving anew, as the fabric slowly unwinds, we shall see in it no gorgon figures, no hideous grotesques of the old barbarism, but the figures of liberty,—vines, and golden grains, framing in the heads of justice, love, and liberty. The august convention of 1787 framed the Constitution

with this memorable preamble: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union and establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain this Constitution for the United States of America."

Again, in an awful convention of war, the people of the United States, for the very ends just recited, have debated, settled, and ordained certain fundamental truths which must henceforth be accepted and obeyed; nor is any State or any individual wise who shall disregard them. They are to civil affairs what the natural laws are to health—indispensable conditions of peace and happiness. What are the ordinances given by the people, speaking out of fire and darkness of war, with authority inspired by that same God who gave the law from Sinai amid thunders of trumpet voices?

1. That these United States shall be one and indivisible.
2. That States have not absolute sovereignty, and have no right to dismember the Republic.
3. That universal liberty is indispensable to Republican Government, and that slavery shall be utterly and forever abolished.

Such are the results of war; these are the best fruits of the war. They are worth all they have cost. They are foundations of peace. They will secure benefits to all nations as well as to ours. Our highest wisdom and duty is to accept the facts as the decrees of God. We are exhorted to forget all that has happened. Yes, the wrath, the conflict, the cruelty, but not those overruling decrees of God which this war has pronounced as solemnly as on Mount Sinai. God says: "Remember—remember,"—hear it to-day. Under this sun, under that bright child of the sun, our banner, with the eyes of this nation and of the world

upon us, we repeat the syllables of God's providence, and recite the solemn decrees—

NO MORE DISUNION !

NO MORE SECESSION !

NO MORE SLAVERY !

Why did this civil war begin ? We do not wonder that European statesmen failed to comprehend this conflict, and that foreign philanthropists were shocked at a murderous war that seemed to have had no moral origin, but, like the brutal fights of beasts of prey, to have sprung from ferocious animalism. This great nation,—filling all profitable latitudes, cradled between two oceans, with inexhaustible resources, with riches increasing in an unparalleled ratio, by agriculture, by manufactures, by commerce ; with schools and churches, with books and newspapers thick as leaves in our own forests, with institutions sprung from the people, and peculiarly adapted to their genius—a nation not sluggish but active, used to excitement, practised in political wisdom, and accustomed to self-government, and all its vast outlying parts held together by a Federal Government mild in temper, gentle in administration, and beneficent in results,—seemed to have been formed for peace. All at once in this hemisphere of happiness and hope, there came trooping clouds with fiery bolts full of death and desolation.

At a cannon shot upon this fort, all the nation, as if it had been a trained army lying on its arms awaiting a signal, rose up and began a war which for awfulness rises into the first rank of bad eminence. The front of battle going with the sun was twelve hundred miles long, and the depth, measured along a meridian, was a thousand miles. In this vast area more than two million men, first and last, for four years, have in skirmish, fight, and battle, met in more than a thousand conflicts, while a coast

and river line, not less than four thousand miles in length, has swarmed with fleets freighted with artillery. The very industry of the country seemed to have been touched by some infernal wand, and with sudden wheel changed its front from peace to war. The anvils of the land beat like drums. As out of the ooze emerge monsters, so from our mines and foundries uprose new and strange machines of war, iron-clad. And so in a nation of peaceful habits, without external provocation, there arose such a storm of war as blackened the whole horizon and hemisphere.

What wonder that foreign observers stood amazed at this fanatical fury, that seemed without Divine guidance, but inspired wholly with infernal frenzy? The explosion was sudden, but the train had long been laid. We must consider the condition of Southern society if we would understand the mystery of this iniquity. Society in the South resolves itself into three divisions, more sharply distinguished than in any other part of the nation. At the base is the laboring class, made up of slaves; the next is the middle class, made up of traders, small farmers and poor men; the lower edge of this class touches the slave, and the upper edge reaches up to the third and ruling class. This ruling class was a small minority in numbers, but in practised ability it had centred in its hands the whole Government of the South, and had mainly governed the country. Upon this polished, cultured, exceedingly capable, and wholly unprincipled class, rests the whole burden of this war.

Forced up by the bottom heat of slavery, the ruling class in all the disloyal States arrogated to themselves a superiority not compatible with republican equality nor with just morals. They claimed a right of preëminence. An evil prophet arose, who trained these wild and luxuriant shoots of ambition to the shapely form of a political philosophy. By its re-agents, they

precipitated drudgery to the bottom of society, and left at the top what they thought to be a clarified fluid. In their political economy labor was to be owned by capital; in their theory of government, a few were to rule the many. They boldly avowed, not the fact alone that under all forms of government the few rule the many, but their right and duty to do so. Set free from the necessity of labor, they conceived a contempt for those who felt its wholesome regimen. Believing themselves foreordained to supremacy, they regarded the popular vote, when it failed to register their wishes, as an intrusion and a nuisance. They were born in a garden, and popular liberty, like freshets overswelling their banks, covered their dainty walks and flowers with the slime and mud of democratic votes.

When, with shrewd observation, they saw the growth of the popular element in the Northern States, they instinctively took in the inevitable events. It must be controlled or cut off from a nation governed by gentlemen. Controlled less and less could it be in every decade, and they prepared secretly, earnestly, with wide conference and with mutual connivance to separate the South from the North. We are to distinguish between the pretences and the real causes of this war. To inflame and unite the great middle class of the South, who had no interest in separation and no business with war, they alleged grievances that never existed, and employed arguments which they, better than all other men, knew to be specious and false. Slavery itself was cared for only as an instrument of power or of excitement. They had unalterably fixed their eyes upon empire, and all was good which would secure that, and bad which hindered it.

Thus the ruling class of the South, an aristocracy as intense, proud, and inflexible as ever existed, not limited either by customs or institutions, not recognized and adjusted in the regular

order of society, playing a reciprocal part in its machinery, but secret, disowning its own existence, baptized with ostentatious names of democracy, obsequious to the people for the sake of governing them ;—this nameless lurking aristocracy, that ran in the blood of society like a rash not yet come to the skin ;—this political tapeworm, that produced nothing, but lay coiled in the body, feeding on its nutriment and holding the whole structure to be but a servant set up to nourish it ;—this aristocracy of the plantation, with firm and deliberate resolve, brought on the war that it might cut the land in two, and, clearing itself from incorrigible free society, set up a sterner, statelier empire, where slaves worked that gentlemen might live at ease. Nor can there be any doubt, that though at first these malign plotters meant to erect the form of republican government, this was but a device—a step necessary to the securing of that power by which, they should be able to change the whole economy of society.

That they never dreamed of such a war as ensued we may well believe. That they would have accepted it though twice as bloody, if only thus they could rule, none can doubt that knows the temper of these worst men of modern society. But they miscalculated ; they understood the people of the South, but they were totally incapable of understanding the character of the great working classes of the loyal States. That industry which is the foundation of independence, and so of equity, they stigmatized as stupid drudgery, or as mean avarice ; that general intelligence and independence of thought which schools for the common people and newspapers breed, they reviled as the incitement of unsettled zeal running easily into fanaticism. They more thoroughly misunderstood the profound sentiment of loyalty, the deep love of country which pervaded the common people. If those who knew them best had never suspected the depth and power of that love of

country which threw it into an agony of grief when the flag was here humbled, how should *they* conceive of it who were wholly disjoined from them in sympathy?

The whole land rose up, you remember, when the flag came down, as if inspired unconsciously, by the breath of the Almighty, and the power of omnipotence. It was as when one pierces the banks of the Mississippi for a rivulet, and the whole raging stream plunges through with headlong course. There they calculated and miscalculated. And more than all, they miscalculated the bravery of men who have been trained under law; who are civilized, and hate personal brawls; who are so protected by society as to have dismissed all thought of self-defence; the whole force of whose life is turned to peaceful pursuits. These arrogant conspirators against government, with Chinese vanity, believed that they could blow away these self-respecting citizens as chaff from the battle-field. Few of them are left alive to ponder their mistake.

Here then are the roots of this civil war. It was not a quarrel of wild beasts; it was an inflection of the strife of ages between power and right—between ambition and equity. An armed band of pestilent conspirators sought the nation's life; her children rose up and fought at every door, and room, and hall, to thrust out the murderers, and save the house and household. It was not legitimately a war between the common people of the North and South. The war was set on by the ruling class, the aristocratic conspirators of the South. They suborned the common people with lies, with sophistries, with cruel deceits and slanders, to fight for secret objects which they abhorred, and against interests as dear to them as their own lives.

I charge the whole guilt of this war upon the ambitious, educated, plotting political leaders of the South: *They* have shed

this ocean of blood. They have desolated the South. They have poured poverty through all her towns and cities. They have bewildered the imagination of the people with phantasms, and led them to believe that they were fighting for their homes and liberty, whose homes were unthreatened, and whose liberty was in no jeopardy. These arrogant instigators of civil war have renewed the plagues of Egypt, not that the oppressed might go free, but that the free might be oppressed.

A day will come when God will reveal judgment against them, and arraign at His bar these mighty miscreants; and then every orphan that their bloody game has made, and every widow that sits sorrowing, and every maimed and wounded sufferer, and every bereaved heart in all the wide regions of this land, will rise up and come before the Lord to lay upon these chief culprits of modern history their awful witness! And from a thousand battle fields shall rise up armies of airy witnesses, who, with the memory of their awful sufferings, shall confront these miscreants with shrieks of fierce accusation, and every pale and starved prisoner shall raise his skinny hand in judgment. Blood shall call out for vengeance, and tears shall plead for justice, and grief shall silently beckon, and love, heart-smitten, shall wail for justice. Good men and angels will cry out, How long, O Lord, how long wilt thou not avenge? And then these guiltiest and most remorseless traitors, these high and cultured men, with might and wisdom used for the destruction of their country, these most accursed and detested of all criminals, that have drenched a continent in needless blood, and moved the foundations of their times with hideous crimes and cruelty, caught up in black clouds full of voices of vengeance and lurid with punishment, shall be whirled aloft and plunged downward forever and forever, in an endless retribution; while God shall say, Thus shall it be to all

who betray their country. And all in heaven and upon the earth will say, Amen! Amen!

But for the people misled—for the multitude drafted and driven into this civil war—let not a trace of animosity remain. The moment their willing hands drop the musket and they return to their allegiance, then stretch out your own honest right hand to greet them. Recall to them the old days of kindness. Our hearts wait for their redemption. All the resources of a renovated nation shall be applied to rebuild their prosperity, and smooth down the furrows of war.

Has this long and weary period of strife been an unmingled evil? has nothing been gained? Yes, much; this nation has attained to its manhood. Among Indian customs is one which admits young men to the rank of warriors, only after severe trials of hunger, fatigue, pain, and endurance. They reach their station not through years but ordeals. Our nation has suffered, and now is strong. The sentiment of loyalty and patriotism, next in importance to religion, has been rooted and grounded; we have something to be proud of, and pride helps love. Never so much as now did we love our country. But four such years of education in ideas, in the knowledge of political truth, in the lore of history, in the geography of our own country, almost every inch of which we have proved with the bayonet, have never passed before. There is half a hundred years' advance in four. We *believed* in our institutions and principles before, but now we *know* their power. It is one thing to look upon artillery and be sure that it is loaded; it is another thing to prove its power in battle. We believed in the hidden power stored in our institutions. We had never before seen this nation thundering like Mount Sinai at all those that worshipped the calf at the base of the mountain.

A people educated and moral are competent to all the exigencies

of national life. Votes govern better than crowns. We have proved it. A people, intelligent and religious, are strong in all economic elements. They are fitted for peace and competent to war. They are not easily inflamed, and, when justly incensed, not easily extinguished. They are patient in adversity, endure cheerfully needful burdens, tax themselves for real wants more royally than any prince would dare to tax his people. They pour forth without stint relief for the sufferings of war, and raise charity out of the realm of a dole into a munificent duty of beneficence.

The habit of industry among freemen prepares them to meet the exhaustion of war with increase of productiveness commensurate with the need that exists. Their habits of skill enable them at once to supply such armies as only freedom can muster with arms and munitions such as only free industry can create. Free society is terrible in war, and afterward repairs the mischief of war with celerity almost as great as that with which the ocean heals the seams gashed in it by the keel of ploughing ships. Free society is fruitful of military genius. It comes when called; when no longer needed it falls back, as waves do, to the level of the common sea, that no wave may be greater than the undivided water. With proof of strength so great, yet in its infancy, we stand up among the nations of the world, asking no privileges, asserting no rights, but quietly assuming our place, and determined to be second to none in the race of civilization and religion. Of all nations, we are the most dangerous, and the least to be feared.

We need not expound the perils that wait upon enemies that assault us, as they are sufficiently understood; but we are not a dangerous people because we are warlike. All the arrogant attitudes of this nation, so offensive to foreign Governments, were inspired by slavery, and under the administration of its minions.

Our tastes, our habits, our interests, and our principles, incline us to the arts of peace. This nation was founded *by* the common people *for* the common people. We are seeking to embody in public economy more liberty with higher justice and virtue than have been organized before. By the necessity of our doctrines we are put in sympathy with the masses of men in all nations. It is not our business to subdue nations, but to augment the powers of the common people.

The vulgar ambition of mere domination, as it belongs to universal human nature, may tempt us ; but it is withstood by the whole force of our principles, our habits, our precedents, and our legends. We acknowledge the obligation which our better political principles lay upon us, to set an example more temperate, humane, and just than monarchical governments can. We will not suffer wrong, and still less will we inflict it upon other nations. Nor are we concerned that so many, ignorant of our conflict, of the present, misconceive the reasons of our invincible military zeal. "Why contend," say they, "for a little territory that you do not need?" *Because it is ours.* Because it is to the interest of every citizen to save it from becoming a fortress and refuge of iniquity.

This nation is our house and our fathers' house, and accursed be the man who will not defend it to the uttermost. More territory than we need ! England, that is not large enough to be our pocket, may think that it is more than we need, because it is more than it needs. But we are better judges of what we need than others are. Shall a philanthropist say to a banker, who defends himself against a robber, "Why do you need so much money?" But we will not reason with such questions. When any foreign nation willingly will divide its territory, and give it cheerfully away, we will answer the question why we are fighting for territory.

Turn now to the prostrate and impoverished condition of the rebellious States. Has this war brought no good to them? Yes, much!

1. Deadly doctrines have been purged away in blood. The subtle poison of secession was a perpetual threat of revolution. The sword has ended that danger. That which reason had affirmed as a philosophy, the people have settled as a fact. Theory pronounces, "There can be no permanent Government where each integral particle has liberty to fly off." Who would venture upon a voyage on a ship, each plank and timber of which might withdraw at its pleasure? But the people have reasoned by the logic of the sword and of the ballot, and they have declared that States are inseparable parts of the national life. They are not sovereign. State rights remain, but sovereignty is a right higher than all others; *that* has been made into a common stock for the benefit of all. All further agitation is ended. This element must be cast out of political problems. Henceforth that poison will not rankle in the blood.

2. Another thing has been learned—the rights and duties of minorities. The people of the whole nation are of more authority than the people of any section. These United States are supreme over the Northern, Western, and Southern States. It ought not to have required the awful chastisement of this war to teach, that a minority must submit the control of the nation's government to a majority. The army and navy have been good political schoolmasters. The lesson is learned. Not for many generations will it require further illustration.

3. No other lesson will be more fruitful of peace than the dispersion of those conceits of vanity, which, on either side, have clouded the recognition of the manly courage of all Americans. It it be a sign of manhood to be able to fight, then Americans are

men. The North, certainly, is in no doubt whatever of the soldierly qualities of Southern men. Southern soldiers have learned that all latitudes breed courage on this continent. Courage is a passport to respect. The people of all the regions of this nation are likely hereafter to cherish a generous admiration of each other's prowess. The war has bred respect, and respect will breed affection, and affection peace and unity.

4. No other event of the war can fill an intelligent Southern man, of candid nature, with more surprise, than the revelation of the capacity, moral and military, of the black race. It is a revelation indeed. No people were ever less understood by those most familiar with them. They were said to be lazy, lying, impudent, and cowardly wretches, driven by the whip alone to the tasks needful to their own support and the functions of civilization. They were said to be dangerous, bloodthirsty, liable to insurrection; but four years of tumultuous distress and war have rolled across the area inhabited by them, and I have yet to hear of one authentic instance of the misconduct of a colored man. They have been patient, and gentle, and docile, and full of faith and hope and piety; and, when summoned to freedom, they have emerged with all the signs and tokens that freedom will be to them what it was to us—the swaddling-band that shall bring them to manhood. And after the Government summoned them to the field, they proved themselves to be not second to their white brethren in arms. When the roll of men that have shed their blood is called in the other land, many and many a dusky face will rise, dark no more, because the light of eternal glory shall shine upon it from the throne of God!

5. The industry of the Southern States is regenerated, and now rests upon a basis that never fails to bring prosperity. Just now industry is collapsed; but it is not dead. It sleepeth. It

is vital yet. It will spring like mown grass from the roots that need but showers, and heat, and time, to bring them forth. Though in many districts not a generation will see wanton wastes of self-invoked war repaired, and many portions may lapse again to wilderness, yet, in our life-time we shall see States, as a whole, raised to a prosperity, true, wholesome, and immovable.

6. The destruction of class interests, working with a religion which tends toward true democracy in proportion as it is pure and free, will create a new era of prosperity for the common laboring people of the South. Upon them have come the labor, the toil, and the loss of this war. They have fought blindfolded. They have fought for a class that sought their degradation, while they were made to believe that it was for their own homes and altars. Their leaders meant a supremacy which would not long have left them political liberty, save in name. But their leaders are swept away. The sword has been hungry for the ruling classes. It has sought them out with remorseless zeal. New men are to rise up; new ideas are to bud and blossom; and there will be men with different ambition and altered policy.

7. Meanwhile, the South, no longer a land of plantations, but of farms; no longer tilled by slaves, but by freedmen, will find no hindrance to the spread of education. Schools will multiply. Books and papers will spread. Churches will bless every hamlet. There is a good day coming for the South. Through darkness, and tears, and blood, she has sought it. It has been an unconscious *via dolorosa*. But in the end it will be worth all it has cost. Her institutions before were deadly. She nourished death in her bosom. The greater her secular prosperity, the more sure was her ruin. Every year of delay but made the change more terrible. Now, by an earthquake, the evil is shaken down. And her own historians, in a better day, shall write, that from the day the sword cut off the cancer, she began to find her health.

What, then, shall hinder the rebuilding of this republic? The evil spirit is cast out; why should not this nation cease to wander among tombs, cutting itself? Why should it not come clothed and in its right mind to sit at the feet of Jesus? Is it feared that the Government will oppress the conquered States? What possible motive has the Government to narrow the base of that pyramid on which its own permanence depends? Is it feared that the rights of the States will be withheld? The South is not more jealous of State rights than the North. State rights, from the earliest colonial days, have been the peculiar pride and jealousy of New England.

In every stage of national formation, it was peculiarly Northern, and not Southern statesmen, that guarded State rights. But once united, the loyal States gave up forever that which had been delegated to the National Government, and now, in the hour of victory, the loyal States do not mean to trench upon Southern State rights. They will not do it, or suffer it to be done. There is not to be one rule for high latitudes, and another for low. We take nothing from the Southern States that has not already been taken from the Northern. The South shall have just those rights that every Eastern, every Middle, every Western State has—no more, no less. We are not seeking our own aggrandizement by impoverishing the South. Its prosperity is an indispensable element of our own.

We have shown by all that we have suffered in war how great is our estimate of the importance of the Southern States to this Union, and we will honor that estimate now in peace by still greater exertions for their rebuilding. Will reflecting men not perceive, then, the wisdom of accepting established facts, and with alacrity of enterprise begin to retrieve the past? Slavery cannot come back. It is the interest, therefore, of every man to

hasten its end. Do you want more war? Are you not yet weary of contest? Will you gather up the unexploded fragments of this prodigious magazine of all mischief, and heap them up for continued explosions? Does not the South need peace? And since free labor is inevitable, will you have it in its worst forms or its best? Shall it be ignorant, impertinent, indolent, or shall it be educated, self-respecting, moral, and self-supporting? Will you have men as drudges, or will you have them as citizens? Since they have vindicated the Government and cemented its foundation stones with their blood, may they not offer the tribute of their support to maintain its laws and its policy? It is better for religion, it is better for political integrity, it is better for industry, it is better for *money*, if you will have that ground-motive, that you should educate the black man, and by education make him a citizen. They who refuse education to the black man would turn the South into a vast poorhouse, and labor into a pendulum incessantly vibrating between poverty and indolence.

From this pulpit of broken stone, we speak forth our earnest greeting to all our land. We offer to the President of these United States our solemn congratulations that God has sustained his life and health under the unparalleled burdens and sufferings of four bloody years, and permitted him to behold this auspicious consummation of that national unity for which he has waited with so much patience and fortitude, and for which he has labored with such disinterested wisdom. To the members of the Government associated with him in the administration of perilous affairs in critical times; to the Senators and Representatives of the United States, who have eagerly fashioned the instruments by which the popular will might express and enforce itself, we tender our grateful thanks.

To the officers and men of the army and navy, who have so

faithfully, skilfully, and gloriously upheld their country's authority by suffering, labor, and sublime courage, we offer a heart-tribute beyond the compass of words. Upon those true and faithful citizens, men and women, who have borne up with unflinching hope in the darkest hour, and covered the land with their labors of love and charity, we invoke the divinest blessing of Him whom they have so truly imitated.

But chiefly to Thee, God of our fathers! we render thanksgiving and praise for that wondrous providence that has brought forth from such a harvest of war the seed of so much liberty and peace. We invoke peace upon the North; peace be to the West; peace be upon the South. In the name of God, we lift up our banner, and dedicate it to Peace, Union, and Liberty, now and forevermore. Amen!

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